



# Sticks and stones

The MassArt Free Press

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### what do you think?

Send submissions, comments, inquiries to: the sticks and stones SGA mailbox, e-mail at [sticksandstones@massart.edu](mailto:sticksandstones@massart.edu), or call ext. 469 (232-1555).

Sticks&Stones has weekly meetings. Come and discuss with us. You'll laugh, you'll cry...A newspaper will be born. Thursday evenings at 7pm. Call ext. 469 for more info.

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Letter to

# the Editor

*Dear Mary-Bridgette,*

*I went into the cafeteria one afternoon, needing a snack and a drink. Besides the fact that there are very few beverages selections which aren't soda, or over two dollars, the snacks seem to be overly*

*unhealthy. Nonetheless, the*

*aroma of tasty cookies beckoned, and I answered.*

*I figured what the heck,*

*I'll get one cookie and a*

*drink from the vending*

*machine. The cookie was one*

*dollar! What's up with that?!*

*I know a week before, the*

*cookies had been 75 cents.*

*So, I asked the cashier, thinking she had made a mistake. "No" she said, "They are raising the prices of the food, but not the salaries. And these kids still keep buying this stuff!" I contemplated this as I ate my cookie.*

*What ever happened to people*

*concerned with our*

*interests? I'm almost*

*positive that nobody*

*has suggested in that*

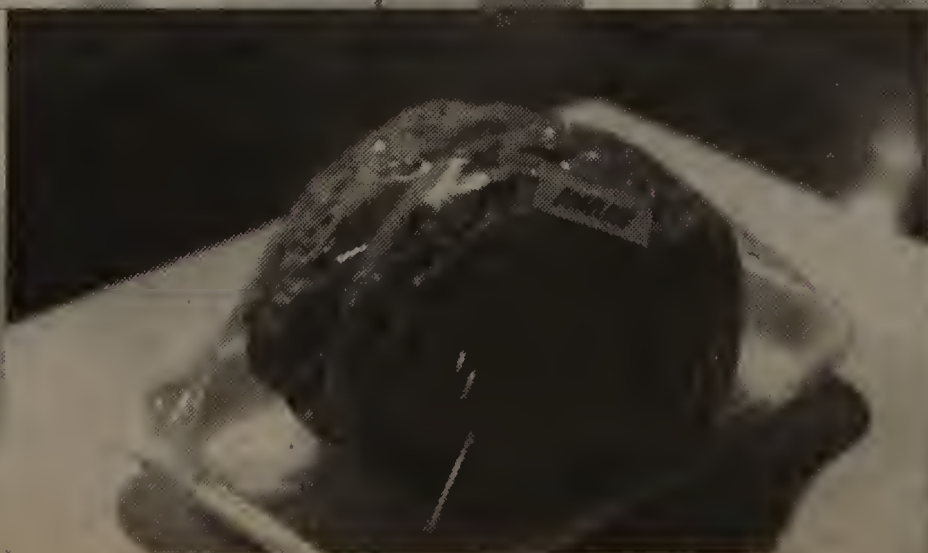
*little suggestion box, that*

*Dak's should raise*

*their prices.*



SO, the question is, what's really going on? I think that when Dak's knew the heat would be on them, they were prepared to look better, but in reality, they're trying to over charge and under serve, just like many other corporate businesses. I can only ask that people start avoiding over priced items. Use the suggestion box! We won't tolerate it in the bookstore, so why should we let it go on in the cafeteria?





From Fibers to painting:

MassArt in the Community







written by Amanda P. Casares  
(Fibers major)

The sun was up and the volunteers were excited. Questions and demands for jobs were the first thing to touch my ear early Saturday, October 24th at the David A. Ellis School in Roxbury. "Okay take a paint brush and this orange paint and fill in the sun, but don't paint beyond the lines.". What more could I tell them, they are investors, not artists. The energy was constantly high throughout the afternoon. As I step back, putting my hand over my face to shade my eyes from the setting sun, a rush runs all over my body. I gasped in astonishment. It is beautiful. These guys were talented beyond my expectations. The kids are going to love it.

Joy Adams and I got to design playground games and a mural for the City Year Serve-a-thon with only a week's notice. Part of City Year is sponsored by MFS, a huge investing company that provides a lot of funds for them to provide service for Boston. On this day, they sent many of their staff to do volunteer work at the school. We were

responsible of organizing and leading the group in creating the mural and games. Joy made a site visit to discover the mural wall to be one hundred and twenty feet long and five feet high, design school games to be painted on the playground and put names on a lonely United States map that laid lifeless on the middle of the playground. "We had a blast creating it on paper, it was even better seeing it come reality. "

The day was much more than I ever expected. I meet a incredible Disney animator that helped us shade and do the enhancing of the mural. MassArt has just the right way of training you to be confident and secure of your are performance, no matter if your major is fibers or painting. People seemed to trust us even though we were half their age. I think MassArt did help City-Year and the volunteers felt secure that we could handle it. These people were so kind hearted and they just did what the could to change this sad playground into something more positive.

The community Outreach group really provided Joy and I with the tools to be able to accomplish something in the community. This new group helps the students reach the community through their work. It is so important for us as artist to aid and educate the world on how amazing and necessary art is. It is a way of reaching within you and putting it outside to benefit



others. It builds great character and a enormous heart. I believe that when you do it once you will want to serve again. I can only thank MassArt for giving us the push and opportunity to be "out there".





## Blurring the BOUNDARIES

The Worcester Art Museum recently held an exhibition of installation art entitled "Blurring the Boundaries". The show was an excellent overview of accomplishments in this medium, containing signature works by some of the most powerful artists in the field. The pieces were integrated in to several different rooms of the museum's permanent collection, making more clear the necessity and function of the role of a new Modern medium in the context of a classical perception of art. Listed are artists' names followed by an impromptu

narrative of my reactions to each piece as I respond to them.

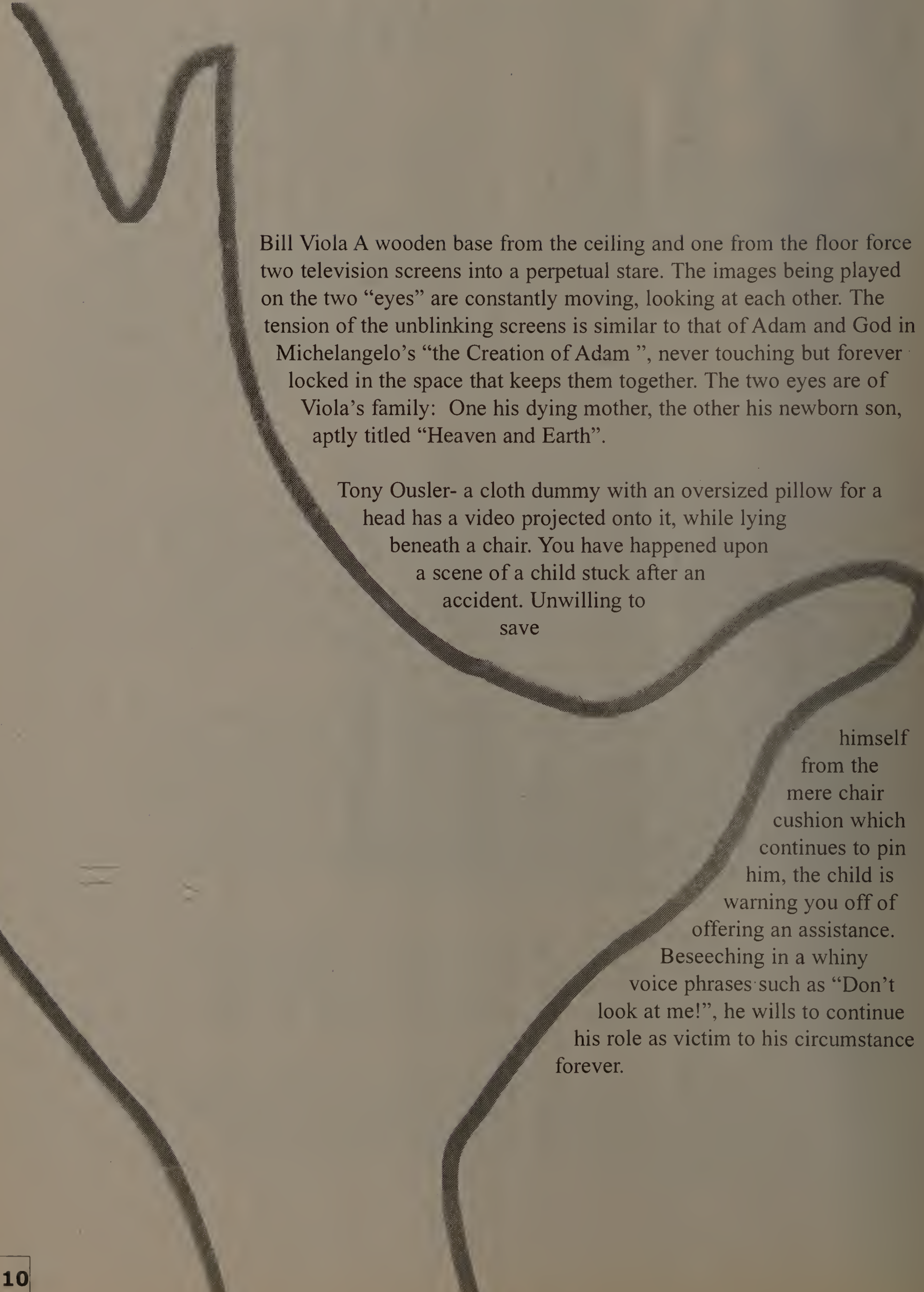
Ann Hamilton- Upon entering the gallery you meet a fabricated room lined with script, longhand words. The room has a very open feel. A sense of order is imposed by the grid of white blankets. The text-covered blankets could imply comfort or resemble the lining a padded room, used to prevent psychologically damaged people from hurting themselves, with obsession literally written all over its interior. White, cloth boots are gathered in a pile outside the entrance of the room, emptying the room of the material from which it is padded with metaphorically stripping away that which would soften physical and psychological blows.

C. Burden- has presented a grid of pennies on the floor. Attached to each penny is a wooden match. He has made order of what simple objects imbued with the energy for mass destruction. Pennies and matches are harmless in their untouched state, yet one open flame would be all it took to set every piece actively destroying the whole of itself. This piece is about the potential of the objects, both symbolically and inherently, to create great change when they are amassed and used according to the person's moral perception.

Richard Long- On the floor gathers a circle of sharp geometric rocks, gray and maroon in color. Your eye sees it first as a whole shape then is drawn to the fragmentation of the whole into shadows. The three dimensional aspects of this plane are as infinitely complex as organic orders.

Dennis Oppenheim a row of identical off-white, with a few red and blue, wax figures in a lineup being held at gun point by red, white and blue lights. The light reacts to the very stuff their bodies are made of, destroying them.





Bill Viola A wooden base from the ceiling and one from the floor force two television screens into a perpetual stare. The images being played on the two “eyes” are constantly moving, looking at each other. The tension of the unblinking screens is similar to that of Adam and God in Michelangelo’s “the Creation of Adam ”, never touching but forever locked in the space that keeps them together. The two eyes are of Viola’s family: One his dying mother, the other his newborn son, aptly titled “Heaven and Earth”.

Tony Ousler- a cloth dummy with an oversized pillow for a head has a video projected onto it, while lying beneath a chair. You have happened upon a scene of a child stuck after an accident. Unwilling to save

himself from the mere chair cushion which continues to pin him, the child is warning you off of offering an assistance. Beseeching in a whiny voice phrases such as “Don’t look at me!”, he wills to continue his role as victim to his circumstance forever.



James Turrell a two foot by 9 foot red rectangle glows in a dim room. Only when you get up close to the piece do you discover that this “three-dimensional” object is made of projected light. This seamless illusion plays delightfully with your perceptions.

Anish Kapoor- is located in the 13th through 14<sup>th</sup> century Italian art wing. A red gash on the museum’s wall amid the medieval religious pieces , “The Healing of St. Thomas” reverberates with connections between contemporary and classical art. The wounding of the hallowed and pristine white wall presents some of the most powerful possibilities of conceptualism that minimalism has to offer visual language.

Sarah Seager- “Panacea”, a light box covered in gauze on one side, standing as a presence among the columns of a medieval storeroom. This image conjures up the searching by many in the Middle Ages for the light of spirituality in the uncertain Dark Ages. King Arthur and the Holy Grail comes to mind...

Tony Cragg- Plastic artifacts on a wall next to Egyptian artifacts form the silhouette of Michelangelo’s “Dying Slave”. The yellow to white colors of the bits of plastic evoke the marble coloration of the piece it gives homage to. Michelangelo’s illustration of a human being in the agonizing throws of death are now presented in a man-made material which never rots, in the garbage that man has to capacity to produce thanks to his technological skill.

These pieces shatter the perception that Modern art is meaningless or hard to understand, especially when integrated into an classical context. This show allows Modern to be not so foreign and all art more universal. Artists seem to be looking for something tangible. If the modern world has become hostile to humans then this art seeks to restructure that world of convenience. Muted color and grids are used to hold order while your mind echoes with reverberations of significance of the symbols presented. The honing of visual aspects riddles with subtlety, restraint and truth. If art is the canary in the coal mine, then artists must continue to produce the reminders of the human condition.

Mary Brigitte McNeil



.....The Scene

.....by Johnny Arguedas

### Overview

O.k. people, diversity is the spice of life. Like cilantro. Damn, that stuff rocks. Anyway, I've decided to fill you all in on some of my thoughts and travels. Its been a busy couple of weeks, so I narrowed it down a bit and gave you the meaty goodness (or, if a vegetarian, the vegetably goodness) inside. Serve over linguine and enjoy.

### **Act 1: The Holy [Plagurism Batman!] Roman Empire**

So there I am in my Art History class, pondering something that has bothered me ever since I was a tiny nerdy tot, devouring the encyclopedia about mythology. What's up with the Romans? I mean, sure, you look at the Greeks. Beautiful sculpture. The birth of philosophy. Really bitchin' ZZ Top-y beards. You feel insecure. You conquer almost everything in sight, and yet you have no idea about what to do with your religion. So what do you decide?

[Shot of coffee bar, everyone inside wearing togas]

Announcer: We've secretly replaced Archidaetes mythology with the Roman equivalent. Let's see if he notices...

Archidaetes: Hey, this is almost like mine, but most of the gods are name after planets! What gives?

Because of this egregious and blatant act of plaguirism, I am giving the Romans an 'F' and sending them to detention for a month. Bad Romans!  
Bad, NAUGHTY Romans!



## **Act 2: Superfly Sounds**

Album: "Into the Sun" by Sean Lennon

Dig this: Sean Lennon meets up with Cibo Matto. He plays bass for them. Falls in love with band member Yuka. Writes an album dedicated to her with the encouragement of label-mate Adam Yauch (from the Beastie Boys). What follows is a sweet album of mellow sounds to put you in a slow groove. His voice is just like his dad's, except if John sang as a teen with a plugged up nose. The sound blends well with the music though, adding to the laid back atmosphere. He goes from punk influenced folk to bossa nova with ease, and the quirky lyrics can catch you off guard at times: "Maybe I'm a lonely kind of man/Like a rapper with a 40 in his hand/I can't stand." It's a great "Gonna chill and forget my woes" album, perfect for lazy Sundays.

## **Act 3: Would You Like Some Surrealism With That?**

Restaurant: Dali

You finish contemplating ancient civilizations, you've sat back to some groovy tunes, and now it's time to head out into the world. Where to get some grub? Well, if you're craving some great Spanish dish, it's time to head on out to Somerville and experience Dali. The decor is all that you'd expect from a restaurant with such a name. And what's more: the food is delish. Authentic cuisine with subtle flavors and a wonderful atmosphere. I've never had so much fun waiting for my food. The service was prompt and attentive. One thing though: the main dishes can get pricey, so if you want to save some cash, do what most of us non-rich folk do and get the tapas: a sort of meat or veggie filled pastry that is considered an appetizer but does well as a meal. And for the romantically inclined, you'll do no wrong. Expect mad mackin' points with your date. I can only sum it up in two words: awwwww yeah.

## **Act 4: No no, you're thinking of INGRID Bergman**

Movie: The Seventh Seal

Director: Ingmar Bergman

You know, sometimes I hear about a classic, and think to myself, "Yeah, right. Just some movie critics trying to sound like they have an intelligent opinion." But this allegory about life and death, set in the Middle Ages,

truly shines as an intriguing, entertaining, and engrossing masterpiece. Rent this, you silly goose.

**Act 5: Whoa, That Last Review Was Too Short**

No kidding.

**Act 6: Building A Beautiful Mess**

Place: Middle East

Band: Built to Spill

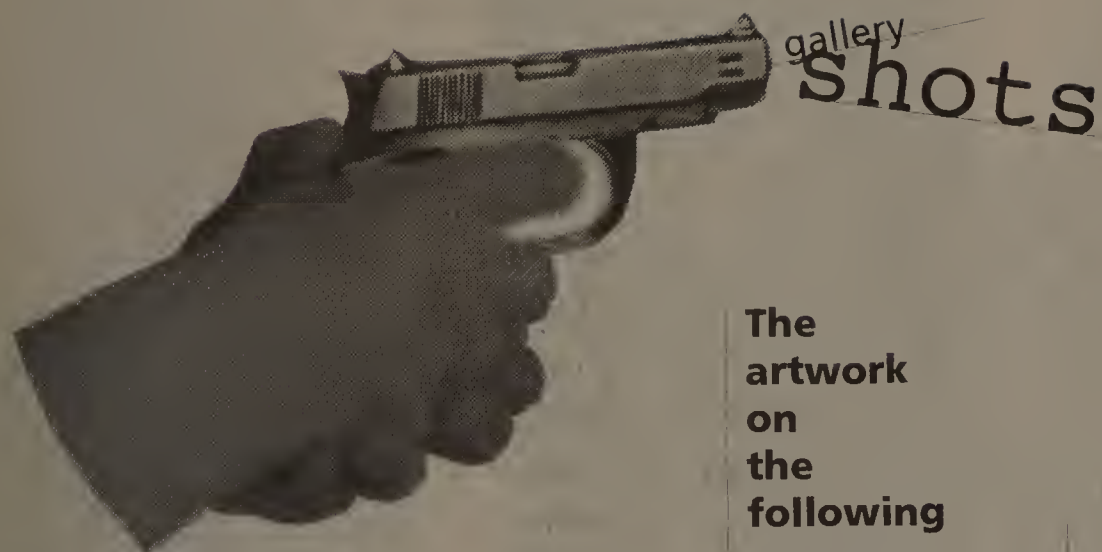
With the opening bands causing a rather lethargic state for the audience, I was set to sit down and introduce my face to the table. But just before I snooze away, out comes Doug Martsch with his guitar, ready for some rock. Immediately I awake from my daydream and watch this man play his guitar as if it was his best friend since 2nd grade. Effortless and precise, yet with a sense of easygoing attitude, Martsch easily slips from staccato rhythms to wild solos and back to steady pacing without a blink. This three piece outfit really had the crowd going, and Doug's sugar-sweet singing fit in with the pop hooks. Not content on being static, the songs evolve from a simple pattern and grow into complex rhythms that help the band from becoming just another standard alterna-rock act. I tell ya, it was a hell of a ride.

**Act 7: Where the Conformists Love to Bounce**

Place: Axis

Ok, so you want a club that's 19+ on a Friday night? First place I saw was Axis. On Fridays Axis likes to tempt the young club goers with 2 floors: 1st floor is techno, 2nd floor is straight up 80's. While standing outside waiting to get in, I almost wanted to shout, "Hey you with the black pants and white top!" in order to induce whiplash to 95% of the women that were in line. The guys weren't very original either. Listen men: Leave your baseball caps at home. Really. Once inside, the pumping bass line kept going and going and going at the same steady pace. The only way you can tell if it's a different song is by the different 2 second sample. Hey, if you're into that then by all means, but I need soul in my music, as well as variety. Dancing to the same beat for 3 hours can get monotonous. Go upstairs and you get a more subdued crowd. 80's music has never lent itself to the dancing elite; it don't take much skills to shake your rump to Flock of Seagulls. The interesting contrasts between the two types of music will have you moving back and forth between floors. All in all, if you're stuck with nothing to do, are under 21 and wanna release some pent up tension, this is the place for you. As for me, I think I'll save \$12 and listen to my Propellorheads CD at home.

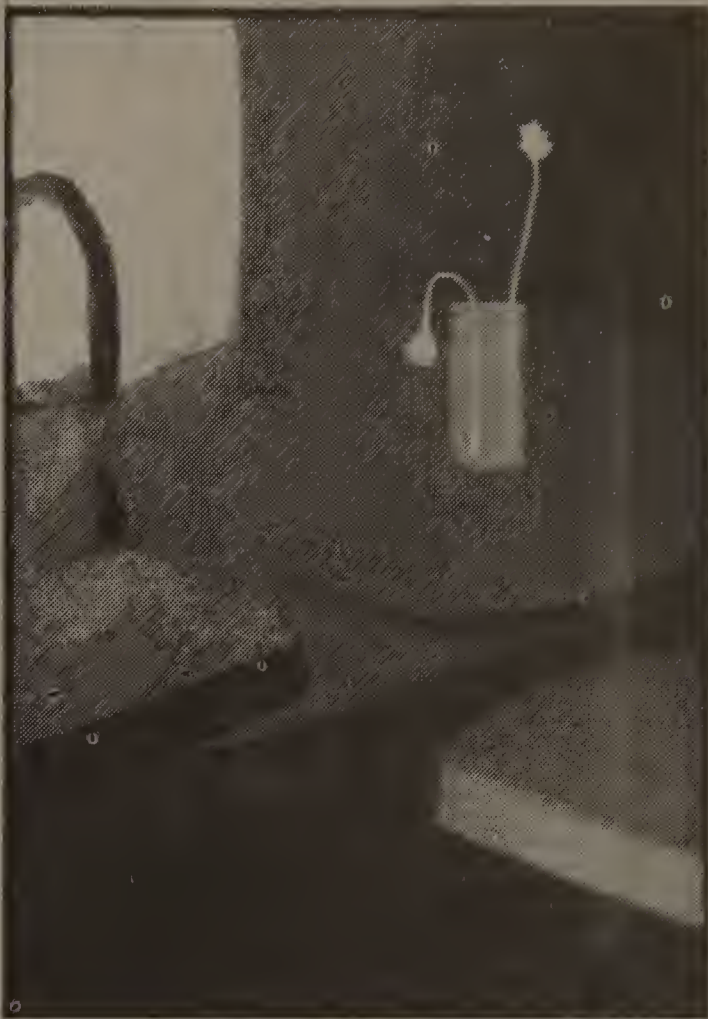




**The artwork on the following pages comes from various shows and exhibits that took place at Mass College of Art. Big thanks to everyone who contributed to this section.**

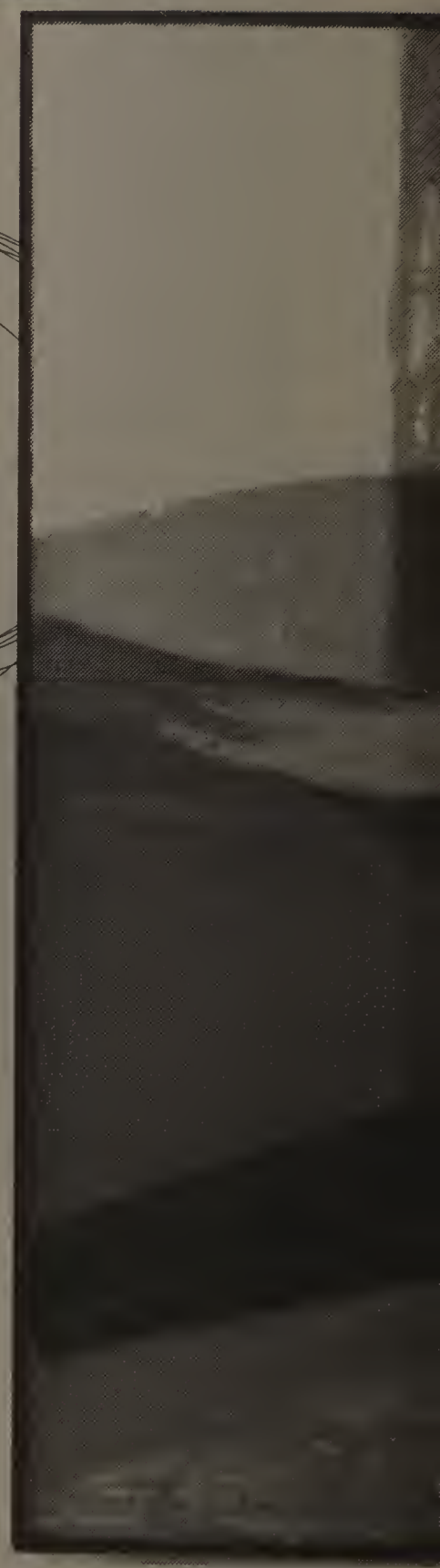
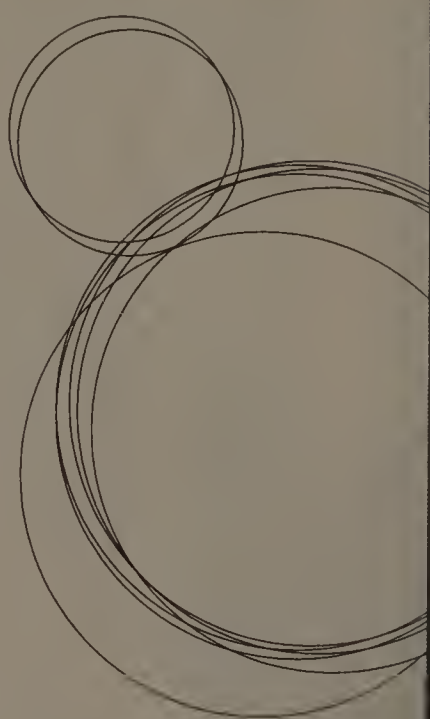
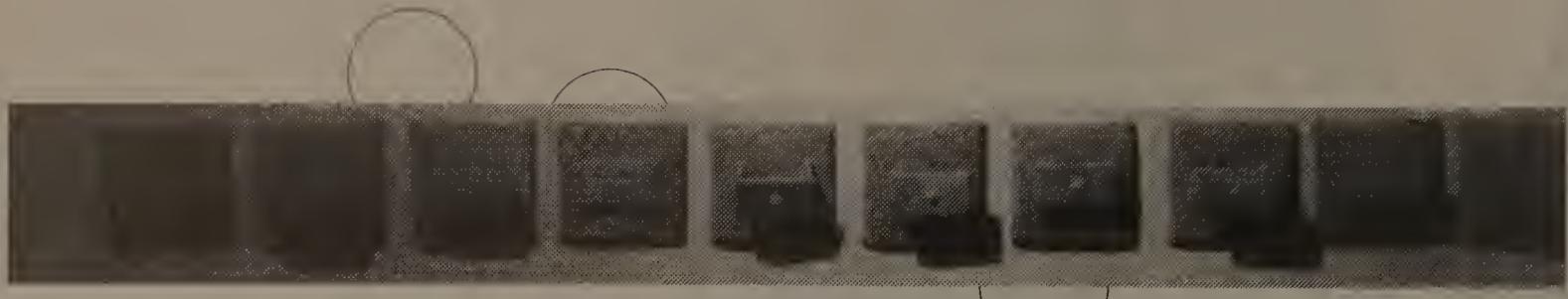
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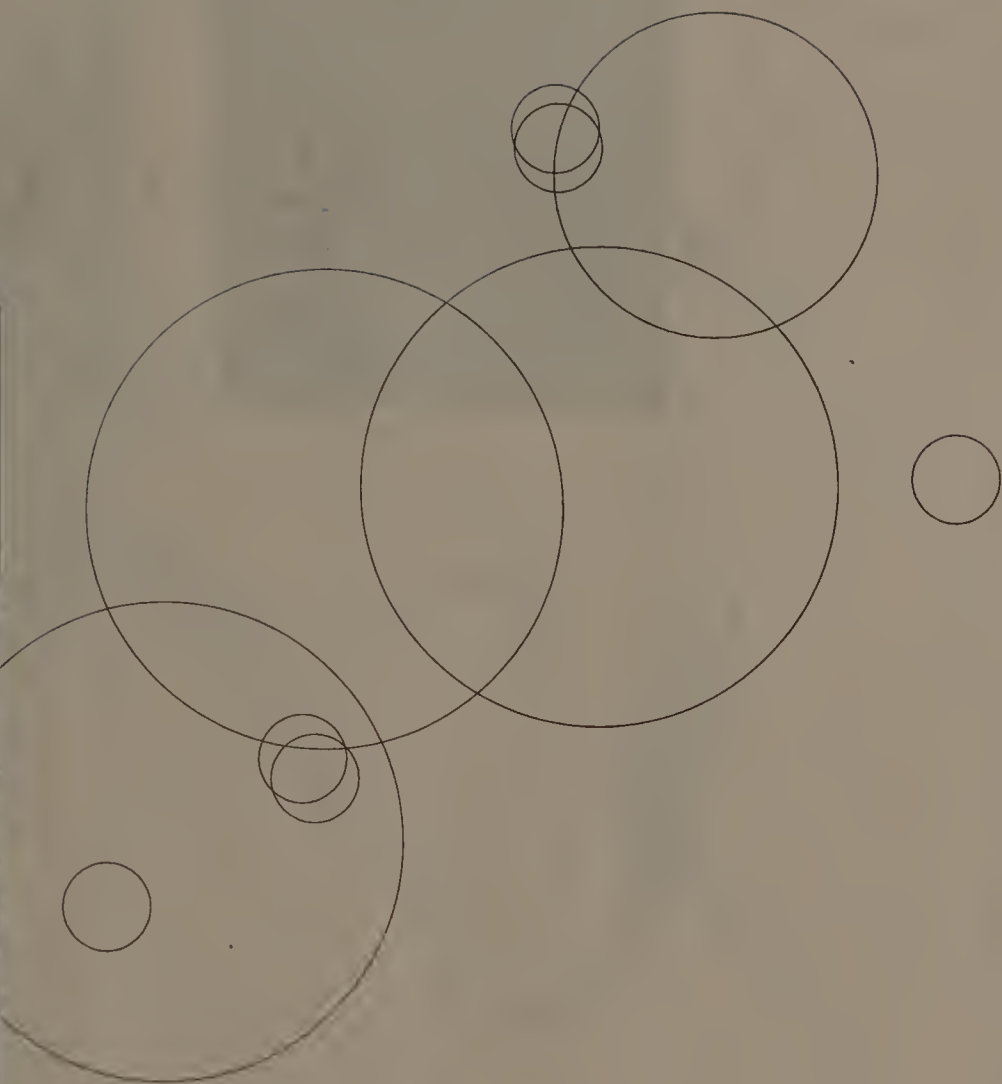


















## **First thoughts on a college campus**

Knapsacks with sketch pads packed, pockets with pencils overflowing, minds full of concepts waiting for their first showing, dreams dying to be executed, hopes and artful wishes rushing through veins in our bodies' streams, but something is not quite what it seems. Something seems to be diluting the vivid color of our future...  
last I remember it was called reality....

It follows me. Every time I step, it appears in the form of shadows of ignorance and blows as vicious and unexpected as winter winds of racism in a summer of cultural appreciation. Bright rays, hidden prejudices are enough to blind the average eyes, but I use my third eye as a guide through this maze of multicultural illusions, for this utopian mirage causes so much confusion.

My smiles are met by eyes darting to the ground. Hands that used to smack greeting daps are greeted by those hidden in pockets afraid jewelry and watches won't come back.

What ever telling of horrific inner city tales festers in the mind;  
I can guarantee the face on the TV wasn't mine,  
but for some reason we appear to be the same one,  
maybe we enjoyed similar things for fun....

I got the same skin tone, the same dark eyes, possibly even the same styles of dress. But I'm no crook, I confess. I, too, would be startled by my look; in the middle of the night dressed in all black, rocking a black beanie cap, with those brown eyes eclipsed by red shades of fatigue.



I guess I ,too, would be giving looks that might be considered demeaning, in empty corners of the elevator, terrified and leaning, moving with precaution in corridors, because I too would fear me.

I'd be in fear of me because I might have overcome too many obstacles, broken down too many stereotypes and prejudices of the past, worked too many hours recreating slave-like conditions, all for my fees, for my supplies, my food and this tuition.

I maybe even heard my parents voice quiver in my ear the night before on the phone, when I spoke of this segregated alone feeling I'm feeling, though "open minded artist" is all that I'm supposed to be seeing.

You see, I'd fear that I hadn't been through enough, that my work would seem dull in comparison and not deep enough, for my journey into myself has just begun, when the ones I fear had been traveling down that road since their first years and I'd fear that I could not be as fearless as they who walk hallways, corridors, shadowed stairwells, and crowded elevators and city streets at all hour appear to be..... as they fearing no attack of those who are called majority.

But I'd turn that fear into inspiration to understand and educate myself; that is only if the looks in those eyes was not familiar, because then we'd see eye to eye. I would have already, through whatever form of communication we could find, sent a message that society's ignorant actions have not left me blind.

And I would have already said hello.

**Wesley Issac Richardson**  
**spectrum member/film maker**

# SEX

It's something almost everyone has or had , or at least thinks about having.

It plays a monumental role in our lives and how our society is run. Recently we have seen how the sexual morals of the United States can bring down the leader of the free world. We have witnessed that even in the office of the most powerful man in the country, sex is always on our minds, and what's in our pants can often influence the decisions we make. So given all that we want to know where **YOU** stand.

As an ongoing attempt to get to the center of MASSART'S proverbial tootsie roll pop, we wanted to know who you're doing, how you've been doing it (or not been doing it) and at what age you started doing it! I would just like to say, after examining the results of the survey, and comparing that to my own experiences, I feel like a little **whore**. Regardless, the results were interesting and sometimes shocking. ( I had no idea so many girls owned pornography!)

A diverse cross section of MassArt was asked to participate (you know who are) and this is what you said:

## **if you HAD to classify yourself you would identify as:**

### **straight:**

males: 80% females: 47%  
gay: males: 8% females: 5%

### **bisexual:**

male: 12% females: 25%

### **very curious: males:**

0% females: 18%

### **semi curious:**

males 0% females: 5%

## **are you a virgin?**

males : 15% yes  
females: 35% yes

## **age you lost your virginity:**

males : 25% 17, 20% 18, 20% 20, 10% 15, 15% 16, 10% 14  
females : 40% 17, 40% 16, 5% 18, 5% 21, 10% 14

## **was it important for you to lose your virginity? :**

males : 50% yes  
females : 47% yes





**how many different people( to your best recollection) have you had sex with?**

males: **1-5** 70%, **6-10** 15%, **10-20** 15%

females : **1-5** 80%, **6-10** 20%, **10-20** 0%

**is "oral sex" sex?**

males : 30% yes

females : 20% yes

\* it should be observed here that the number of times a surveyee has had sex rose dramatically when they had to consider oral sex as sex!

**ever had sex with more than one person at a time?**

males : 7% yes

females: 5% yes

\* no one who answered this survey has had sex with more than two people at a time!

**do you believe people should wait until marriage to have sex?**

males: 4% yes

females: 25% yes

**if sexually active, have you been tested for H.I.V.?**

males: 45% yes

females: 48% yes

**if sexually active, have you been tested for other S.T.D.'s?**

males: 25% yes

females: 45% yes

**(for women) ever believed to have been pregnant?**

49% yes!

## **THE MASTURBATION SECTION!!!!!!**

\* masturbation is a sacred thing and sometimes even more taboo than real sex!(Dr. Joycelen Elders, ex attorney general) but it can play a very important role in our sex lives, even for people who CAN get laid. When Chrissy cant be there "Mary Palm " can. Therefor we thought it important to devote a few questions for those of us "flying solo".



### **have you masturbated before?**

males: 97% yes  
females: 95% yes

### **do you own pornography?**

males: 45% yes  
females: 40% yes

### **at what age did you first masturbate?(males)**

7-10 5%, 11-12 50%, 13-14 40%, 15 5%

### **at what age did you first masturbate?(females)**

1-5 40% , 7-10 30%, 11-12 10%, 13-14 20%, 15 0%

### **how many times a week do you masturbate?(males)**

1-3 40%, 4-6 30%, 7-10 20%, 11-14 10%

### **how many times a week do you masturbate?(females)**

1-3 53%, 4-6 20%, 7-10 20%, 11-14 7%

### **if you are not having sex, is it because of "religious reasons?"**

males: 100% NO!  
females: 20% yes

### **wish you were having MORE sex?**

males: 75% YES  
females: 82% YES!

\* by the way, no one who answered the survey wished they "were having LESS sex

### **now that you are at MASSART, are you having more or less sex?(males)**

less: 73% more: 27%

### **now that you are at MassArt , are you having more or less sex?(females)**

less: 75% more: 25%

### **who would you rather have sex with, Bill Clinton or Linda Tripp?(males)**

Bill: 25% Linda: 75%

### **who would you rather have sex with, Bill Clinton or Linda Tripp?(females)**

Bill: 94% Linda: 6%

### **are you currently in a relationship?**

males: 97% no!  
females: 12% yes!



**ever cheated on your partner?**

male: 100% no!!

female: 96% no!

**have you ever employed bondage or role-playing during sex?**

male: 50% yes!!

female: 65% yes

\* as much as you people like to get tied up and shown who's boss,

no one who answered the survey has ever videotaped themselves having sex!

**where your partner is concerned, is penis size important to you at all?**

male: 75% no

female: 95% no

**how important a role does "love" play in your sex life?(male)**

a very big part: 75%, plays a part : 15%, sometimes it does: 15%,

never does: 0%

**how important a role does "love" play in your sex life?(female)**

a very big part: 40%, plays a part: 40%, sometimes it does: 15%,

never does: 5%

**did you find this survey sexually arousing?**

males: 75% yes!

females: 95% yes

**\*do you find any of your current classmates sexually arousing?**

males: 26% YES!!!!!!

females: 70% YES!!!!!!!!!!

.....  
so what have we learned????

#1, girls **do** masturbate, **and** they own **porn**!

#2, virginity is still a virtue especially on this campus!

#3, not enough people are getting tested for H.I.V!!!!!!!!!!!!!! and...

#4, **everyone on this campus is SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED!!!!!!**

**now go home and masturbate!**

# CULTURAL FUNCTIONS OF ART

by Tim Graham

Being an art student requires not only a great deal of time-consuming physical process in the creation of works of art, but also a large amount of intellectualization, which can be just as exhausting. Artists may be considered a type of material philosopher. Art is a deep and broad subject to approach, involving many separate issues and disciplines. There are all sorts of initial problems to consider when confronting the arts, from formal aspects to content and message to tradition and originality.

Every aspect of art is worthy of extensive research, opinion, and debate. However, I have found that I, like many students, tend to overlook a fundamental question about art as I pick at the more specific branches. I haven't fully considered the whole hand, even as I studied the fingers.

The question is this: What is the function of art and what role does it play in society, especially in modern times? It is such an intimidating question that I seem to pass over it and rely upon my intuition to guide me. There is nothing really wrong with that, but how can I go on soiling canvases without considering the WHY? I feel the need to begin to resolve this issue, if not with any amount of universal truth, then at least enough to satisfy my self truth.

Although I will hardly scratch the surface here, I think it is still worthwhile to open the door a crack and shed a sliver of light on the sleeping beast. I am not going to attempt to nail art down by proposing it's universal utility; that's just ridiculous, given the subjective nature of art. To dissect art until it is sterile and inert would be a disservice to all artists. I merely want to address the beginnings of the WHY.

It seems a little odd to me that in my three and a half years of art schooling, not much has been formally presented to me in regard to the basic purpose of art. Why do people make art in the first place? Why do people make sacrifices in their lives for this sometimes arcane practice? Am I supposed to simply know these things already?





It's easy to become jaded and cynical as to the role of art in our capitalist system. Outrageous gallery prices and the seemingly arbitrary and constantly shifting tastes of the wealthy art-buying minority can dilute the intrinsic nature of art. For anyone who has written off the arts as a commercial tragedy, I can assure you that for every hack who tempers his or her work in order to adapt to the market's standards, there are one hundred bitter purists that we will never hear of because they denied the market.

What inspires those that realize their capital inviability, yet continue to slave over their work? What inspired Felix Nussbaum to continue painting even while incarcerated in a Nazi concentration camp? Why did Henry Darger produce an epic body of work but never showed anyone while he lived? I suggest that art serves its function on a deeper, primal level that is part biologically based, but also directed by one's cultural molding.

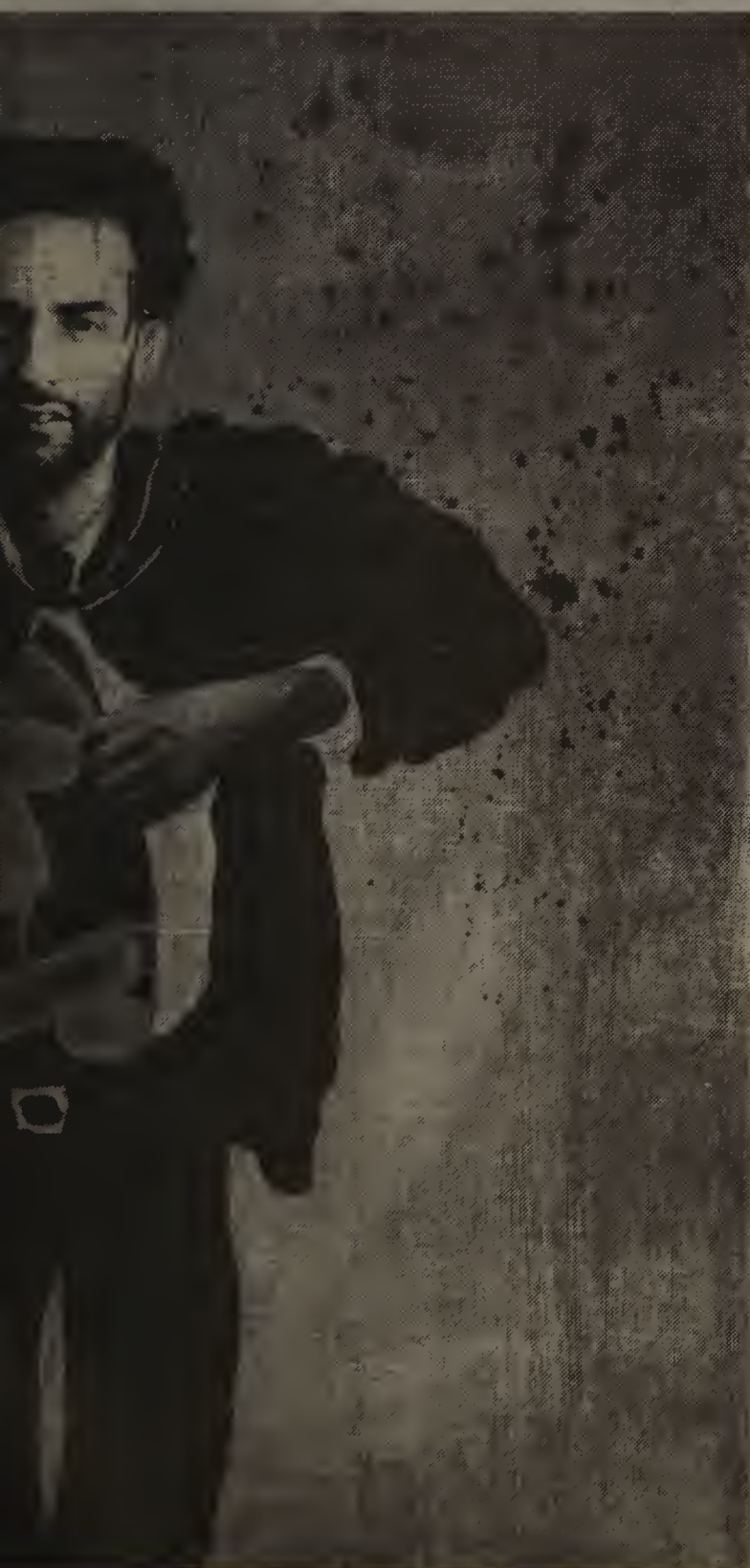
It is curious that so much emphasis has been placed upon the arts throughout history, even though technology has been slowly eroding its overt utility. Art began as a necessity and has been subsidized over the millennia until we were left with what we now regard as art.

15,000 years ago, cave paintings allowed early man to not only communicate with contemporaries, but also to depict man's struggle with nature in a ritualistic symbolism that provided morale, order and a sense of mystic power over the elements. Their art served these obvious purposes and perhaps more that have been lost to time.

As mankind spread and cultures evolved, language and symbols became related. Those symbols were standardized, giving way to the written word, beginning with cuneiform and hieroglyphs on down to our modern languages. Some Asian characters still retain traces of their pictorial origins,

but the west went abstract thousands of years ago. These symbols that were exclusive to image making were the first of many of the functions of art that were to be stripped away, specialized and adopted by the whole of society.

Art, throughout history, has been used for communication, duplication, representation, and religious expression. It leaves an excellent visual history of mankind's philosophies, actions and cultures. This historical significance is a function of art that is only realized in posterity.





A recent utility of art that was challenged by technology was the realistic representation of people and environments. Realist paintings and sculptures documented the world since the renaissance. But in the late nineteenth century, that unique property of the arts was appropriated by the introduction of the camera. Rather than stealing a function of art, however, photography became an art unto itself and freed other branches of art from the bounds of strict representational image making. New philosophic and psychological aspects of art became apparent through cubism, expressionism, futurism, and further abstraction. Photography liberated artists and allowed them to explore unknown inner environments.

This leads to another fulfillment of the utility of the arts, which is a satisfaction of a primal desire for an organized space where abstract thoughts can be

approached. Picasso and Braque showed the world what Einstein's new physics suggested. Artists like Pollock and Basquiat pictorialized the stream of human unconsciousness and action. Artists since the modern era have continued to challenge traditional views and provide starting points for the viewer's imagination.

In my opinion, perhaps the most important role of art is its ability to, at times, under the right circumstances, create a bond directly from mind to mind; from artist to spectator. I raise the question: How close can we really get to one another? Man is a social creature, but we are alienated by our unique experiences. The beautiful quality of being unique creatures has the drawback of basic isolation. Physical contact can only bring people to a certain degree of closeness. Conversation can create a bond, but meaning can be lost among cumbersome words. It is the job of an effective work of art to reduce the separation between minds down to the barest minimum distance.

We exist alone, in our own unique spheres of experience. A great work of art can create a deep connection between the artist and viewer. The spheres of the artist and spectator draw close, almost brushing up against one another when all the pieces are in the right place. Luckily, there is no formula for this experience.

This function of art is more relevant today than ever before in the face of growing isolation through technology. It cannot be bought off, replaced or duplicated. Computers cannot threaten this mode of truth. It is only the great artist who can show you the inside of their individual mind, lay it bare for the





spectator. It is a selfless act, requiring all of the following components: Artist, work of art, and spectator.

Marcel Duchamp put it this way:

“...the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his [sic] contribution to the creative act.”

For me, It is in the intimate connection between unique beings that art finds its most profound function. It satisfies the intrinsic need of people for the company of another mind. This sort of connection is not bound by language, culture, time, or content. The fact that there is no formula is one of art's most powerful driving forces. The quest to fulfill this thirst for contact can power an artist for decades.

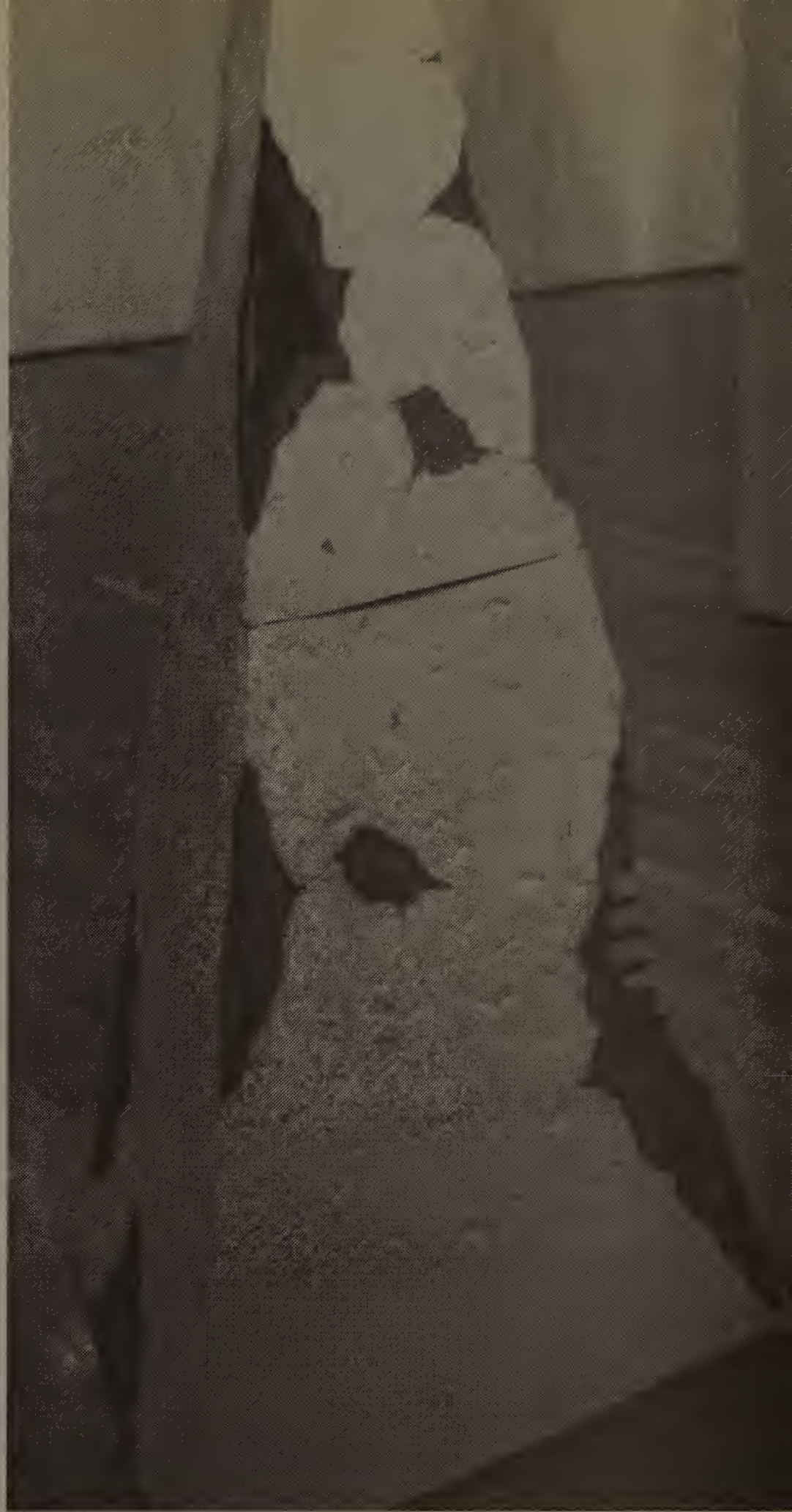
Morandi's dedication and perseverance almost forces us to see the beauty and sensuality in the commonplace that he does. Art is a cumulative process, assimilating information much like the sciences. Wayne Thibaud picked up Morandi's torch. Damian Hirst explores Duchamp's domain today. We learn from the past, employ it in the present, and leave it for the future to continue the cycle...

This, of course, does not approach the full spectrum of the utility of art in society. I have not addressed art as a political tool, a meditative process or a biological experience. These are simply my own first associations with art. The ones that come to mind most quickly. Art could be halved and halved infinitely, each slice revealing a new use or quality.

It seems ironic to me that I have tended to overlook the fundamental issues of art while I was busy exploring the more specific sub-issues. Art is a metaphor for our individual experience. It allows us to communicate on a sub-verbal, sub-conscious level, and inspires in us new avenues of thought.

We must remember to ask ourselves, “What is art for?” and “Why do I make art?” so that we can reiterate the purpose of this bizarre activity for ourselves. And it is different for each of us, I would imagine.

Art allows us to strip IT down and find the NERVE of it ALL.





The Philosophers

Tim Graham 1998

